

AMERICAN GIRLS ARE SERIOUS STUDENTS

THAT IS WHY SO MANY ARE
MAKING GOOD IN GRAND
OPERA

Paris, June 26.—American students of grand opera are the most enthusiastic of all foreigners who come to Paris to learn how to act their parts after they have finished the vocal study of an opera. They make the finest actresses in the world. That has been my experience in the many years I have taught mise en scene here.

The speaker was Professor Robert Villani, one of the best known acting teachers in Europe, and an old friend of Jean de Reszke, who is conducting an operatic school here. Villani and de Reszke have sung together in many opera houses in both Europe and in South America. Villani is a baritone. Jean de Reszke, as a tenor is well known to the patrons of the Metropolitan opera house in New York.

Professor Villani was born in Naples, but he speaks French like a native, and also some English.

"Yes," said Professor Villani, "I prepare most of Jean de Reszke's pupils for the operatic stage. It is a pleasure to teach a great singer, and nearly all those who come to me from the great Jean are excellent singers. If you stay long enough you may hear and watch two American pupils whom I expect in a short time. They will sing and act their respective parts in the first and second acts of Giuseppe Verdi's beautiful 'Traviata.' Too bad that this opera is not heard very often. The secret of that is that

it calls for a first-class coloratura soprano singer, and such voices are very rare. I understand that at your great opera house in New York you have had no regular coloratura singer in more than two years. Very well. You stay and you will hear a fine coloratura voice."

"How do American students of grand opera compare with the students of other countries?" he was asked.

"American girls are the best students I have," he replied. "They work harder than other girls. They seem to 'catch on' more readily. You see them come here from great distances with a determination to make good. English students do not, as a rule, exhibit that great fire of real enthusiasm. Germans are too stiff, but I must say that when you do find a real artist among the Germans you find a star. The French don't seem to care. But, ah, my own countrymen! They are natural born actors and actresses."

"Step this way and I will show you the little theater where I turn out the great actors in grand opera. You must be able not only to sing your part in an opera to perfection, but you must also be perfect in your acting. Without that, no matter how fine and true a voice you may possess you can never expect to become an actual star."

Professor Villani's "little theater" is a room about 20 feet square. At the farther end is a small stage running clear across the studio. At one side is a piano. A few chairs face the stage. The light comes from immense windows, much as are found here in all up-to-date studios. In the center of the stage was a table, with three chairs around it. There were two large arm chairs on either side of the stage well toward the front. On the table were writing paper and envelopes and several goose quills and a small bell.

"You see," remarked the great maestro, "we have the stage set for 'Traviata.' Wait and you will hear

and see."

The walls were covered with photographs of songbirds whom Professor Villani has instructed.

"There is the great Siesak," he said. "I taught him how to act Othello, his master role, in which he appeared at the Metropolitan opera house in New York. He is probably better suited for that part than for any other because of his great height and corpulence. Amato, the greatest of all baritone, was my pupil. There was Wilhelm the tenor of the Vienna opera house; Mme. Alexandrowicz; Guardabassi, whom you heard in New York; Marco, the tenor of the Opera Comique; Areson, another tenor, who is now singing in Milan; Didur, the great basso, who sang at the Metropolitan opera house last winter; Miss Temple, a soprano, now singing in Naples; Charlotte Lund, soprano; Miss di Langard, a dramatic soprano, now engaged at Covent Garden, in London; Agnes Hanick, a dramatic soprano now singing at the Opera house in Como; Mme. De Lerma, the dramatic soprano of the Royal opera at Madrid; Odette Le Fontenay, the lyric soprano of Covent Garden; Wiet, the tenor, whom New Yorkers heard recently; Sembach, also a tenor, who sings at the Royal opera house in Dresden; Miss Aurora Marcia, dramatic soprano of the Paris opera house; and here comes Marry Montefino, who has just signed a contract for three years as first lyric tenor at the opera house in Hamburg."

Signor Montefino, who spoke to the maestro in Italian only, promptly dropped his Italian and in good English (American style) said:

"I am so glad to meet some one from America, and especially from New York. You know my right name is Feinberg—Harry Feinberg—and I used to live in New York, on the east side. I turned the name into Italian, Feinberg—Montefino. Artists, you know, are privileged to take liberties with their names."

Miss Frances Roeder, a New York

girl, who is studying grand opera with Jean de Reszke, was next introduced: "All ready!" said Professor Villani. Miss Roeder and Signor Montefino went on the stage; the pianist played from the first act of "Traviata" and the performance began. It was all very interesting. Miss Roeder sang the part of Violetta and the tenor that of Alfredo.

LIBRARIANS MEET AT OTTAWA

Ottawa, Ont., June 26.—The American Library association informally began its thirty-fourth annual convention here today, the meeting being the first the association has held in Canada since 1900. The association has nearly 2,500 members, including librarians of public, college, university, medical, law, state and other libraries; assistants of libraries, library trustees, publishers, booksellers and friends of libraries in general. About 1,500 members are here to participate in the meeting.

Today was devoted principally to the reception of the visitors. The initial business session will be held tomorrow morning, when Mrs. H. L. Elmeendorf of Buffalo, the first woman to be honored with the presidency of the association, will deliver her annual address. At the subsequent sessions all phases of library work will be discussed. The papers, addresses and discussions will center principally around the subject of the opportunity afforded by the public library as an open door for information and culture.

The program will partake of the international nature of the meeting, one session being given over wholly to the presentation of Canadian topics by Canadian speakers. Among these speakers will be George E. Foster, Canadian minister of trade and commerce; Professor Andrew McPhail of McGill University, James W. Robertson, C. M. G., of the commissioner of conservation, and Dr. George H. Locke, librarian of the Toronto public library.

Prominent among the participants from the United States are Dr. Herbert Putnam, librarian of congress; Dr. George E. Vincent, president of the University of Minnesota; Carl H. Hillan, secretary of the Indiana library commission; Carl B. Roden, of the Chicago public library; Walter L. Brown, of the Buffalo public library, and Miss Tessa L. Kelso of New York.

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ANCIENT DOCUMENTS.

Clyde, N. Y., June 26.—In constructing the Barge canal a trunk full of valuable old documents has been discovered. Among the documents are two genuine George Washington signatures to furloughs granted soldiers during the revolution; an old account book of the original John Jacob Astor, and a partial record of Lafayette's journey through New York state after the war. There are also a number of old deeds dating back to a time before public record was made of such papers. Duplicate copies were written on a single sheet of paper and the two were roughly torn apart, and their genuineness was afterward proved by matching the irregular edges.

Among the tracts of land acquired was a small lot on the edge of the Montezuma marshes, on which stood a little two-room shack belonging to a hunter and trapper. In the trunk was found, it was originally the property of Judge Tremper of Kingston, who lived during and just after the revolutionary war.

Steps are being taken for the disposal of the records.

Old papers for sale. Optic office

BASEBALL NOTES

According to unofficial figures the Washington team has seven men in the 300 list of batters.

With the exception of Zimmerman the Chicago Cubs have not been able to do much in the batting line.

Catcher Hank Goudy, of the Boston Nationals, is temporarily out of the game nursing an injured hand.

The Philadelphia Nationals have landed Pitcher Rixey, the clever southpaw of the University of Virginia baseball team.

It begins to look as though the Pittsburgh Pirates are the real "hope" to give battle to the Giants for the National League fabric.

The Cleveland Naps have four of the first six men in the honor list of American league batters, and still the Naps are not able to get up among the contenders.

When the Boston Red Sox visited Chicago Tris Speaker made six hits, with a total of 10, against Ed Walsh in the two games the "Big Moose" pitched.

It would be tough luck for the St. Louis fans to have two teams in the cellar at the same time, so it is up to Roger Bresnahan to keep his Cardinals hanging on the ladder.

Detroit and Chicago fell down badly on their home grounds against the Eastern teams. The Tigers won six of the sixteen games played and the White Sox copped only five out of sixteen games.

They may say that Eddie Plank is going back, but when the veteran pitcher of the Athletics can win eight out of nine games as he has done this season, mere "saying" doesn't count for much.

Some of the critics predicted the first of the season that the Cincinnati Reds would curl up and cower about July 4, and Hank O'Day will

have to keep his hired men on their toes or the critics will win.

It is said that five clubs, Brooklyn, St. Louis, Chicago, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, are lined up solidly against President Lynch of the National League. The chief count in the indictment against Mr. Lynch is alleged poor work in handling his staff of umpires.

With only two veterans in the regular line-up Milan and McBride, the Washington Senators have been standing the American league teams on their heads. Mosler, Gaudil, Foster, Shanks and Morgan, the other stellar members of the Griffith aggregation are youngsters.

PREACHER STOPS "TROT."

Cumberland, Md., June 26.—The sudden appearance of the Rev. William Cleveland Hicks, rector of Emmanuel Episcopal church, in the church being the most historic in the state, standing on the site of North Cumberland, stopped the "Turkey Trot" last night at the dance at the Daisy academy, given by the Young Men's Club of Emmanuel parish.

His presence created a sensation. There had been three "moon" dances with the lights out, and a half dozen couples indulged in the "turkey trot". When the next dance, with the lights on was started and the "trot" was again executed, the minister ordered the orchestra to stop.

Then he addressed the astonished assembly. He said he was "shocked" and nothing so "undignified" could go on in any organization connected with his church. He said he could not call the dance by name, that it was so "vile." The dancing proceeded but there was no more "turkey trot."

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